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Saint Mary's & COVID-19: Update #40

For the second week in a row, we have seen a decrease in new positive cases at **Saint Mary's at Asbury Ridge**. The two waves of testing this week identified two (2) new resident cases and one (1) new employee case. We are hopeful that with continued vigilance our case numbers will continue to improve. The COVID-19 Zone on Unit E remains in place but as we observe residents and their recoveries considerations will be made for shrinking the Zone.

At **Saint Mary's East**, the two waves of testing this week identified fifteen (15) new resident cases and twelve (12) new employee cases. A majority of the new resident cases were from residents in the Gallagher Center. A second COVID-19 Zone has been established in the Gallagher Center to accommodate the needs of these residents while isolating them from the rest of the Unit. The COVID-19 Zone on Unit D will continue to serve other active cases.

We are continuing to use the BD Veritor device for testing and rapid detection. Any positive result that is identified with this device is then followed up with a PCR test analyzed by ACL (Associated Clinical Laboratories) to confirm the result. Individuals that test positive do not need to be retested for a period of about 90 days, as guidance and studies indicate they have some natural immunity during this period. Now that it is also Influenza (Flu) season, those who have respiratory symptoms are also swabbed for the Flu. Read more about the differences between the Flu and COVID-19 [here](#).

Saint Mary's is still awaiting more information from Walgreens about when we can expect to receive the vaccine and who will be getting it first. Again, a timeframe is unknown, but we are anticipating that vaccines could be available for us toward the end of the year or early January. Identifying who all will be included in the initial phase of vaccination will likely depend on how many doses we receive. We do know that Walgreens staff will be on-site to administer the vaccine with support from our team members.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the gift/package drop off last week. We appreciate all your cooperation! We are working on sorting the gifts and will be delivering them next week to your loved ones.